

**USDA, AMS,
Livestock and Seed Program**

APPROVED 

**ITEM DESCRIPTION AND
CHECKLIST OF REQUIREMENTS
(IDCR) FOR BREADED, CATFISH
STRIPS, FROZEN**

Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR):
Standards, Analysis, and Technology Branch
Room 2607, Phone: (202) 720-4486

Effective January 2009

I. ITEM DESCRIPTION

- Item – Breaded catfish strips, Frozen
- Portion Weight – The target portion weight for breaded catfish strips shall be 2.0 ounces.
- Formulation – The frozen breaded catfish strips shall consist of not less than 75 percent catfish flesh in the raw formula.
- Packing – The catfish strips will be packaged in twenty (20) 2-pound bags and placed into cases weighing 40 pounds.

II. CHECKLIST OF REQUIREMENTS

Product will be produced under the Food and Drug Administration regulations and all applicable Federal Acts and regulatory references cited therein which are in effect on the date of production.

A. MATERIALS

Contractors must describe in detail the necessary processing steps, supported with digital images, to comply with the requirements below.

1. FISH FLESH

- a. Domestic Origin of Fish Flesh – The catfish will be harvested from commercial, U.S. farm-raised freshwater catfish of the *Ictaluridae* family: channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*), blue catfish (*Ictalurus furcatus*), and white catfish (*Ictalurus catus*) and its hybrids.
- b. Fresh Only – Only fresh (not frozen) catfish will be allowed.
- c. Flesh Characteristics – The catfish flesh will have characteristics of good quality, including, but not limited to, flavor, texture, and odor and will be evaluated during the prototype review.
- d. Fillets – The catfish strips will be prepared from trimmed catfish shank fillets or irregular/miss cuts (without belly-flap section).
- e. Objectionable Materials – The Contractor must identify and develop a strategy and have a written quality plan that will effectively remove all bones, skin, organs, tails, fins, and foreign materials.
- f. Fish Flesh Content – The breaded catfish strips, frozen shall consist of not less than 75 percent catfish flesh in the raw formula. Catfish flesh injected with added ingredients is prohibited.



2. INGREDIENTS

- a. Domestic Origin of Ingredients – Significant ingredients (more than 1 percent) shall be derived from U.S. produced products when U.S. produced products are available from ingredient suppliers.
- b. Batter/Breading – The catfish strips shall be breaded in a cornmeal based breading similar to those normally used for commercial marketed breaded catfish strips. Batter/Breading shall be applied in a manner so that resulting breaded catfish strips will be completely covered by breading without par-frying or heating in anyway. Additional ingredients that include spices, seasonings, salt, etc., may be used as needed to produce the desired flavor, color, texture, and crispness.
- c. Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) – Use of MSG is not allowed.

3. FINISHED PRODUCT REQUIREMENTS

- a. Sodium – Maximum sodium content must be less than 400 mg/serving
- b. Fat – Maximum fat content must be 8 grams or less per 112 gram/serving
- c. Trans fats – 0 grams/serving
- d. Portion Weight – During production, target portion weight for catfish strips shall be 2.0 ounces. Quality assurance plans will apply upper and lower specification limits of 3.0 and 1.0 ounces respectively.

4. INDIVIDUALLY QUICK FROZEN (IQF)

The breaded, catfish strips shall be IQF so the individual strips do not stick together and are completely covered with batter/breading after they are packaged and packed. The product temperature at the time of shipment and delivery shall not exceed 0°F.

5. PREPARATION/COOKING METHODS

Handling, preparation and cooking instructions for the end user must be declared and appear on individual bags (packaging material).

6. METAL DETECTION

Detection of stainless steel, ferrous, and non-ferrous (e.g., lead, copper, and aluminum) metals is required. The equipment, location, detection procedure, sensitivity levels, frequency of equipment validation, and corrective action procedures will be identified and described.

7. FINISH PRODUCT EVALUATION

The finished products shall be evaluated for cooked flavor, odor, color, and texture in accordance with established sampling and cooking procedures developed by the Contractor.

B. PREPARATION FOR DELIVERY

1. PACKAGING AND PACKING

- a. Packaging - The catfish strips will be packaged in twenty (20) 2-pound bags. The bags shall be closed by heat seal.
- b. Cases - The shipping containers (cases) shall be in compliance with the National Motor Freight Classification or Uniform Freight Classification.
- c. Net Weight – Cases shall be packed into new 40-pound net weight shipping containers of a size to accommodate the product without slack filling or overfilling.
- e. Style and Size of Container – Only one size and style of bags and cases may be offered in an individual shipping unit.

2. LABELING

Both bags and cases will be labeled to include all information required by United States Department of Commerce (USDC) regulations and the required information listed below. Labels must not be able to be removed in an intact form.

- a. Bags – The following information must be on each bag:
 - (1) A traceability code that includes information regarding production establishment, production date and production lot.
 - (2) Nutrition facts based on actual nutritional analysis of the product
 - (3) Cooking Instructions (optional).
- b. Cases – The following information must be on each case:
 - (1) USDA Shield – The shield will be at least 2 inches high and will appear on top or on the principle display panel of each case
 - (2) The applicable contract number.
 - (3) A traceability code that includes information regarding production establishment, production date and production lot.
 - (4) Nutrition facts based on actual nutritional analysis of the product.
 - (5) Cooking Instructions.
 - (6) USDC Inspection Mark – The Processed Under Federal Inspection “PUFI” mark.
 - (7) Product Code: “A751”



3. PALLETIZED UNIT LOADS

All cases shall be stacked on new or well-maintained pallets and palletized with shrink wrap plastic.

C. PRODUCT ASSURANCE

1. QUALITY ASSURANCE

All breaded catfish strips (frozen) will be produced under the USDC, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Type I inspection, which may include Integrated Quality Assurance (IQA) or HACCP Quality Management Program (HACCP-QMP). The contractors must declare the type of NMFS inspection program they are operating under.

2. DELIVERED PRODUCT

- a. Delivery Unit - Each delivery unit will consist of 1,000 shipping containers with a net weight of 40,000 pounds.
- b. Sealing – All products must be delivered to AMS destinations under seal according to Section I. C. of this Announcement.

3. WARRANTY AND COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

- a. Warranty – The contractor will warrant that the product complies with all contractual requirements.
- b. Complaint Resolution – The contractor's technical proposal must provide the steps taken to resolve complaints received on the product, i.e., point of contact, cause and effect analysis, product replacement, monetary compensation and corrective and preventative actions taken.

D. NON-CONFORMING PRODUCT

The Contractor must include a plan to assure that non-conforming product is not delivered under USDA contracts. The plan must address 1) control and segregation of nonconforming product, 2) removal of any USDA markings, and 3) disposition of nonconforming product.